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ABSTRACT

In order to assess the impact of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process, the NBPTS commissioned two surveys in 2001. The first survey examined the impact of the assessment process on teachers who had achieved NBPTS certification. Researchers sent surveys to 600 National Board certified teachers (NBTCs) who had achieved certification from 1994-99, and 235 responded. The second survey examined the effect of the scoring process on the teachers who served as assessors. Surveys were sent to 600 teachers who served as assessors for the NBPTS in summer 2000, and 256 responded. Results indicated that participants considered the National Board certification process an excellent professional development experience. NBCTs and assessors believed that the certification process had a strong effect on their teaching and made them more reflective and more willing to incorporate innovative approaches. The certification process had a positive effect on students, and this led to positive interactions with teachers, administrators, and communities. Nearly 70 percent of NBCTs reported positive changes in their students' engagement, achievement, and motivation. (SM)

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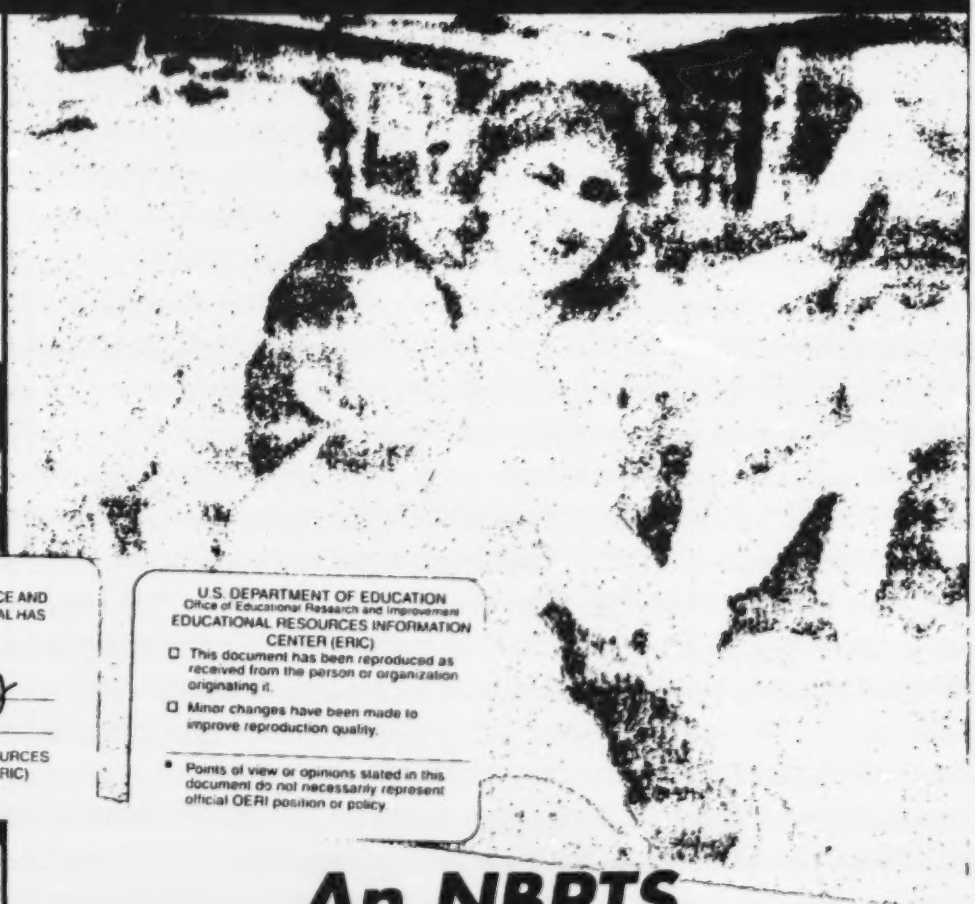
ED 468 746

The Impact of National Board Certification® on Teachers

A Survey of National Board Certified Teachers and Assessors

Fall 2001



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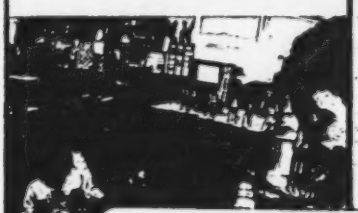

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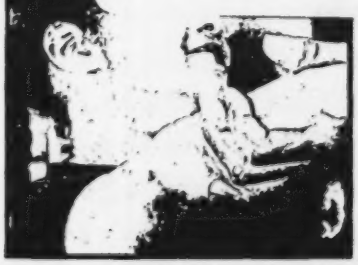

An NBPTS Research Report

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80 percent of the National Board Certified Teachers surveyed said the National Board Certification process was better than other professional development experiences.

The Impact of National Board Certification® on Teachers

Overview and Purpose:

In the past seven years, the number of candidates seeking National Board Certification has grown dramatically. Nearly 10,000 U.S. teachers have achieved National Board Certification, and another 13,000 teachers are seeking the credential in 24 certificate fields this year. While the credential stands as a symbol of professional teaching excellence, the certification process itself is becoming known throughout the educational community as a forceful professional development experience. Teachers are strengthened in their practice, and the beneficiaries of their improvement are the students in their classrooms, their peers, and their communities.

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An NBPTS Research Report
Fall 2001

In order to better assess the impact of the certification process on teachers, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards™ (NBPTS) commissioned two comprehensive research surveys in early 2001. One survey examined the impact of the assessment process on teachers who have achieved National Board Certification, while the second survey examined the effect of the scoring process on the teachers who served as assessors. Assessors are teachers who score portfolio entries and assessment center exercises as part of the certification process. All assessors must attend an intensive training workshop. They must be actively engaged as teachers in the field and teach students at the same level as the students taught by the candidates whose entries they score. Assessors may or may not have National Board Certification.

Sixty-nine percent of the NBCTs surveyed reported positive changes in their students' engagement, achievement and motivation.

Together—and separately—the two surveys demonstrate that the National Board Certification process is powerful and has unique and special benefits to educators, students and communities.

Key Findings:

Among the many important and positive findings that emerged from the two surveys, three stand out.

- **The National Board Certification process is an excellent professional development experience.** *Eighty percent* of the National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) surveyed said the National Board Certification process was better than other professional development experiences,

and 61 percent said the act of going through the process has had a greater impact on them than actually achieving the certificate itself. Likewise, nearly 80 percent of the assessors said their work as an assessor was better than other professional development activities.

- **National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs and Assessors) say that the certification experience has had a strong effect on their teaching.** *Ninety-one percent* of surveyed NBCTs said that National Board Certification has positively affected their teaching practices and *83 percent* said they have become more reflective about their teaching. Assessors also reported that they have transferred their experience into teaching practices.
- **The certification process has a positive affect on students, and has led to positive interactions with teachers, administrators and communities.** *Sixty-nine percent* of the NBCTs surveyed reported positive changes in their students' engagement, achievement and motivation. Since achieving the NBCT credential, teachers said they have received increased recognition and respect, and they are more often sought out for their ideas and opinions.

Research Methods and Response Rates:

Education Resources Group (ERG) of Princeton, N.J., developed, administered, and analyzed the two surveys in the winter and spring of 2001. ERG used the following methods and received the following responses:

"When I plan my lessons, I maintain the mindset I had while going through certification and ask myself, 'What is the purpose of this lesson or activity?' If there is no educational reason behind it, I do not teach it."

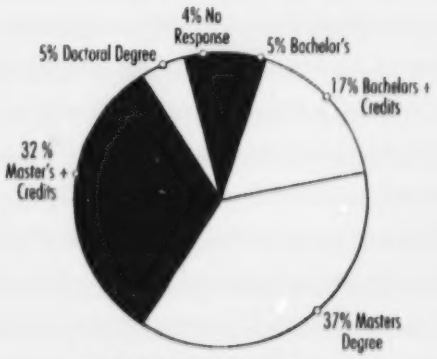
Survey of National Board Certified Teachers (hereafter referred to as the "NBCTs Survey"):

Methodology: ERG sent surveys to a random sample of 600 of the 4,804 teachers who achieved National Board Certification from 1994 through 1999.

Response: Two hundred thirty-five (41 percent) of the surveys were completed and returned.

Respondent Profile: On average, the respondents had 19 years of teaching experience at the K-12 level. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents had at least a master's degree.

Educational Profile of NBCT Survey Respondents. Highest Educational Level.



Source: Table D, Appendix, NBCT survey

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Survey of NBPTS Assessors (hereafter referred to as the "Assessors Survey"):

Methodology: ERG sent surveys to a random sample of 600 of the more than 1,500 teachers who served as assessors for NBPTS in the summer of 2000.

Response: Two hundred fifty-six (42.7 percent) of the surveys were completed and returned. (75 from NBCTs and 181 from non-NBCTs)

Respondent Profile: On average, NBCT assessors had 20 years of teaching experience and non-NBCT assessors had 15 years of teaching experience at the K-12 level. Seventy-two percent of NBCT assessors had at least a master's degree while 64 percent of non-NBCT assessors had master's degrees.

Findings:

In broad terms, the two surveys sought to learn more about the *impact* of National Board Certification on those that it touches: NBCTs, teachers who served as assessors, colleagues and students. Without fail, both the NBCTs and the assessors reported that the certification experience is an over-whelmingly positive one. The findings reveal major effects of the National Board's influence on a teacher's professional development, teaching practices, and interactions with other teachers, administrators and communities.

Major Finding #1: The National Board Certification process is an excellent professional development experience.

- Eighty percent of the NBCTs surveyed said the certification process was better than other professional development experiences. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"The certification process was a very intense and personal experience for me and directly affected the way I think about my teaching."*

- Sixty-one percent of NBCTs surveyed said the process has had a greater impact on them than receiving the certification itself. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"I think I always 'tinkered' about the edges to make the teaching more effective. The National Board Certification process helped me take stock more productively."*

- Nearly 80 percent of the assessors said their experiences were better than other professional development activities. (Assessors Survey)

- Eighty-six percent of the assessors surveyed said it was useful to work with peers. Of these, 44 percent said they enjoyed interacting and networking with other teachers. Thirty-two percent said it was useful to share ideas and teaching strategies. (Assessors Survey)

Ways National Board Certification Affected Teaching Practices

▲ 91 percent of respondents said achieving National Board Certification has affected them in the following ways:*

Reinforces current teaching practices	37%
Plan lessons more thoughtfully	33%
Use more student-focused instruction	31%
Apply performance standards to teaching	25%
Try new teaching tools and/or techniques	20%
Dropped ineffective teaching practices	13%
Use rubrics in student assessments	11%
Other (e.g., engage in continual self-assessment)	10%

No effect on teaching practices = 1% No response = 8%

*Percentages reflect multiple answers given by respondents, so do not total 100%.

Major Finding #2: National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs and Assessors) say that the certification experience has had a strong effect on their teaching.

- Ninety-one percent of surveyed NBCTs said that National Board Certification has positively affected their teaching practices. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"I am more willing to try new things, centered around what is best for the students. I look for more ways to challenge students to think critically."*

- Eighty-three percent of NBCTs said they have become more reflective about their teaching. (NBCTs Survey) Assessors also reported that they have transferred their experience into teaching practices. Sixty-four percent of the assessors said they had become more reflective about their own teaching practices and 89 percent of them said they would work as assessors again. (Assessors Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"One of the strongest points of National Board Certification is the reflective nature of the process. You cannot go through the process without it affecting the way you look at and try to improve every aspect of your teaching."*

- Seventy-five percent of the NBCTs surveyed said they have incorporated new instructional techniques or activities as a result of National Board Certification. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"I am more and more dissatisfied with generic 'one-size-fits-all' instructional materials and approaches. I view each child more as an individual learner and feel more challenged to support learning in ways that build upon his/her learning preferences. Exposure to new ideas about teaching and learning by meeting with other NBCTs makes me hungry to change current instructional approaches and materials."*

Major Finding #3: The National Board Certification process has a positive affect on students, and has led to positive interactions with teachers, administrators and communities.

- Sixty-nine percent of the NBCTs surveyed reported positive changes in their students' engagement, achievement and motivation because of their certification experience. Thirty-five percent said their students were more engaged in and have a positive attitude about learning. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"I think more about my students—their needs and where they are. I am finding a huge amount of success with every student and the curriculum happens naturally."*

- Seventy-five percent of the NBCTs said their certification experience changed how they interact with students. Thirty-nine percent said they now provide opportunities for more interactive student discussions. Thirty-six percent said they are more aware of their students' developmental levels, and 35 percent said they are more sensitive to students' academic needs. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"Before the National Board experience, I taught the class. Now I teach the students."*

- Seventy-four percent of the NBCTs said their new status has resulted in additional professional roles and activities within their school, district and/or community. New or

New Professional Roles and Activities

▲ 74 percent of respondents said achieving National Board Certification had affected their roles and activities *within* their school, district, or community.

▲ Of these 173 NBCTs, the most frequent new professional roles and activities were: *

- serving on committees in school, district, community, or union (39%);
- mentoring NBCT candidates or advocating for NBPTS (37%); and
- mentoring, advising, or sharing ideas with colleagues (33%).

No changes = 23% No response = 3%
*Percentages reflect multiple answers given by respondents, so do not total 100%.

▲ About half of the respondents said being an NBCT has affected their roles and activities *outside* their school district.

▲ Of these 114 NBCTs, the most frequent new professional roles and activities were: **

- mentoring NBCT candidates or advocating for NBPTS (37%);
- serving on regional, state, or national education-related committees (31%); and
- increasing interaction with colleagues, including presenting at conferences and workshops (31%).

No change = 47% No response = 4%
**Percentages reflect multiple answers given by respondents, so do not total 100%.

additional activities included mentoring other teachers, or serving on school, community, district or union committees. (NBCTs Survey)

- Since achieving National Board Certification, 43 percent of the NBCTs said they have received increased recognition and respect. Twenty-three percent said they are more often sought out for their ideas and opinions. (NBCTs Survey)

  Respondent Comment: *"It (National Board Certification) gave me more confidence to explain, model, and support my current practices. I am more willing to share validated expertise."*

Conclusion:

The two surveys clearly establish the value of the National Board Certification process for NBCTs and those teachers who serve as assessors in its ability to:

1. serve as an excellent professional development opportunity for teachers;
2. improve teaching practices, and to positively transfer those practices to the classroom and to teaching peers;
3. lead to increased professional recognition and interaction with colleagues; and
4. improve student attitudes about learning.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will continue to study the effect of the National Board Certification process, and will issue findings as they become available.

About NBPTS:

Created in 1987, NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan and non-governmental organization. National Board Certification was created so that teachers—like professional in other fields—can achieve distinction by demonstrating that they meet high standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. NBPTS currently offers 24 certificates and has plans to offer additional certificates. The certification process requires teachers during the school year to assemble a portfolio that includes, among other items, videotapes of classroom interactions and samples of student work plus the teacher's reflective commentary about the evidence. Candidates also document their education-related work outside of the classroom. During the summer they demonstrate their knowledge of teaching generally, and their subject area specifically, at an assessment center. Trained NBPTS evaluators who teach in the same field as the candidate judge all components of the assessments.

For more information contact:

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An NBPTS Research Report

Fall 2001

NBPTS

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NBPTS Mission Statement

The National Board's mission is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by:

- maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do,
- providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards, and
- advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers.

NBPTS seeks to identify and recognize teachers who effectively enhance student learning and demonstrate the high level of knowledge, skills, abilities and commitments reflected in five core propositions.

The Five Core Propositions

I. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

II. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

III. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

IV. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

V. Teachers are members of learning communities.

The National Board Standards for every field and developmental level are centered on these propositions that express the effectiveness, knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments of the accomplished teacher.

National Board Certified Teachers Promote
Better Teaching, Better Learning, Better Schools

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